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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

September 18, 1973

Mr. Robert A. Diamond
Senior Editor (Books)
Congressional Quarterly
1735 K Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20006

Dear Mr. Diamond:

It has been called to my attention that an article, "Intelligence Agencies Under Fire for Watergate Role," in your fall edition of "Guide to American Government" contains an inaccurate characterization of a series of memoranda written by Lt. Gen. Vernon Walters, the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, i.e.:

"The memos disclosed that Walters made an effort all along to cooperate with the White House cover-up attempt although he said he did not have the authority to make some of the decisions that were asked of him." (page 59)

On May 14, 1973 General Walters testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee on the series of events involved. Following that testimony, as Acting Chairman I stated:

"It is very clear to me that there was an attempt to unload major responsibility for the Watergate bugging and cover-up on CIA. Under these difficult circumstances and heavy pressures, I believe that Director Helms and General Walters, who was at all times operating with the approval of Mr. Helms, behaved very well with respect to this attempt."

Subsequently, on June 25, 1973 John W. Dean, III, testified before the Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities that General Walters was so unalterably opposed to any CIA assistance for the individuals involved, that Dean was "...embarrassed about requesting the (second) meeting because he (Walters) had been most explicit and convincing to me at the first meeting."

It is believed that the memoranda themselves and the public testimony before the Select Committee confirm the essential facts established before the Senate Armed Services Committee, that:

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(1) After General Walters had served for only six weeks as Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, he was issued "instructions" by chief staff aides to the President. This occurred on Friday, June 23, 1972.

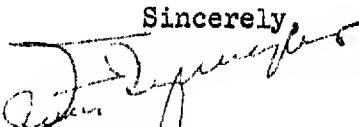
(2) General Walters, on the afternoon of June 23, carried out these instructions in a visit to Acting Director Patrick Gray.

(3) On the next working day, Monday, June 26, he investigated and learned that no factual basis existed for those instructions and he so advised the White House that day under circumstances which could lead him to conclude that he had effectively countermanded the instructions which he had delivered to Acting Director Gray on the 23rd.

(4) Over the next several days General Walters did not buckle under great pressure while "options" were explored but rather said he would resign and see the President if he was pushed any further.

Taking all these facts into consideration, I think it an injustice to General Walters to characterize his actions as "an effort all along to cooperate with the White House cover-up attempt," and believe you will agree.

Sincerely


Stuart Symington

SS:yw

✓ bcc: Mr. Maury

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